

Don't call me babe

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Category: IT (2017)

Genre: Coming Out, M/M, a shocking development: theyre gays, boys who like boys, i dont think youre reddie for this jelly, its a lot of eddie being stressed, not sure how i feel about this fic tbh its not the best, rated for language, the ending is weak dont @ me

Language: English

Characters: Eddie Kaspbrak, Mike Hanlon (mentioned), Richie Tozier, Stan Uris (mentioned)

Relationships: Eddie Kaspbrak/Richie Tozier, implied Stan Uris/Mike Hanlon

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Summary:

Eddie shook his head, opened his eyes.

And there he was. Eddie blinked twice, waiting for Richie to morph into the diseased creature. Waiting for Richie to read his mind, throw him off the bridge, leave him for good.

Don't call me babe

Eddie was a little twitchy. He wasn't clumsy, but he was twitchy. On edge. Anxious. Tight enough to shit diamonds, according to Richie. And, though he hated to admit it, since he'd thrown his fanny pack across the lawn of the house on Neibolt street, it had gotten worse.

So maybe his legs jiggled under his chair. So maybe he tapped his pencil top on the margin of his page. So maybe he wrinkled the corners of his books. So maybe it had been two years and he was still scared.

So maybe the only times he slept through the night were at sleepovers with his friends. So maybe he only really slept through the night when Richie was there- so he tried not to think about it.

He was sitting on Mike's bed when he realized it- he had been trying not to look at Mike and Stan, who were leaning against the headboard and pretending not to look at each other. Their knees touched, almost like wires completing a circuit with too many batteries. So Eddie reluctantly slept on the floor ("but there's dust mites and probably dead skin seriously when was the last time you vacuumed I'm going to choke in my sleep") and he left before the other two woke up. He walked to the kissing bridge, sat down on the edge and resisted the urge to wipe the railing with sani-wipes before resting his forehead against it.

Maybe he was nervous about germs or about breathing in dust and grass seeds from Mike's floor. Maybe he loved his best friend- if you could call Richie a friend, he thought, instead of some sort of vulgar yet endearing toad. He went back to last night's sleepless quandary- watching Richie's face melt into the Leper, his coke-bottle glasses sliding down the rotted space where his awkward cute nose should have been- Eddie shook his head, opened his eyes.

And there he was. Eddie blinked twice, waiting for Richie to morph into the diseased creature. Waiting for Richie to read his mind, throw him off the bridge, leave him for good.

"My my, Mr. Eddie, what a lovely view, I say, simply lovely."

Richie's affected falsetto broke the silence. "And on such a gorgeous day, why, I never. Simply the sort of day to enjoy a breeze about the petticoat, wouldn't you say, my good chap?" Richie paused.

"I say, mayhaps I've found you on a day of some sorrow, eh? Pray, tell me what troubles you, my dear chap? My fellow? Gentleman?" Richie elbowed Eddie gently, almost lovingly. His prissy englishwoman face fell, relaxing into his usual bemused expression. "Fretting over your scandalous affair, hm? Hopelessly in love, bud?" Eddie grimaced in response.

"Oh! Stop the presses! Eddie's in looooooove!" Richie laughed, throwing his arm around Eddie. "So, who's the tragic heroine? The unlucky lady love?" Eddie frowned again. Richie smiled wryly. "Oh, well, then who might the poor boy be? The beau, the man of your dreams, Eddie Spaghetti?" at this, Eddie shoved himself away from Richie. The thought of splinters for once absent, he gripped the graffitied railing, pulled himself upright, and nearly ran towards the Barrens.

He settled down on a log at the edge of their clearing, wrapping his arm around his knees and scratching at the dirt with a stick.

Richie had never known when to quit before, and he wasn't about to now. He waited as long as he could- maybe a minute- and then strolled off to meet Eddie. He knew where the other boy would be- where any of them tended to end up when shit got real.

"Sensitive subject?" Richie plopped onto the log. Eddie had made a decent dent in the dirt, but he kept digging a trench with the stick, refusing to look up.

His lips moved as he repeated, over and over to himself, the words he'd always said before when things got- when he had thoughts. Richie leaned over, trying to read Eddie's lips. The smaller boy breathed out sharply, his silent prayers began to sound like hissing.

Richie kept leaning. "Hey, Eds? Eddie-bo-beddie? Eddie spaghetti? Ed-head? Babe, Sweetness, Eddie-baby?"

"Shut up."

"He speaks! He speaks!" Richie grinned, still leaning over, and cocked his head.

"I said shut up. You're going to give me an aneurysm. Or an embolism. Or an asthma attack." he took a puff on his inhaler, just in case.

"Hey, look, you can tell me. Its therapy. You tell me your problems," Richie put on a truly awful german accent, "Und I will be Sigmont Freud, telling you how you have repressed sexual deviancy, yah." Richie laughed.

"I'm sure you will, after you get done laughing at me. And after you get done with never speaking to me again." *no no no no stop stop stop stop it Eddie don't you dare say anything no shut the fuck up* Eddie's head screeched. The rest of him wasn't sure who to trust- the anxious, leper-seeing, fear part of himself, or the impulsive butterflies and the part of him that felt like it was only there to love Richie.

He loved Richie Tozier. Trashmouth Tozier. His friend- the boy who had pulled his-

"What?" Richie sat back up, interrupting the train of thought and throwing one leg over the log so he sat facing Eddie, who had hunched himself over and was picking at the splintering wood. "What could be that bad? Are you having an affair? An affair with an older woman? An affair with bill's mom? STAN'S mom? Whose mom are you nailing?" Richie scooted forward as he talked, until his knee was pressed against Eddie's thigh. Eddie twitched away.

"Are you having an affair with someone's dad?"

"SHUT UP." Eddie turned toward Richie, who looked halfway between bemused and shocked.

"Woah, woah, okay, Eds. You're not having an affair with anyone's dad. Or anyone's mom, but come on, who wouldn't give the business to Stan's mom? Or Mike's dad, honestly, what a guy."

"No wonder everyone calls you gay." Eddie hadn't meant to say it. He let his head drop into his hands as he did, silently cursing himself.

Richie laughed weakly. "They call all of us gay. They call you gay too. Maybe we should just get married so they can stuff it already." *weak shit*, he thought, *but if i'm too harsh the kid'll start to cry or something*.

"A-a-are y-you?" Eddie whispered through his hands. Richie could see his ears going red, his voice shaking.

"You're stealing Bill's trademark, Eds." *fuck, what am I supposed to say? That I don't know?*

"Answer the question." It almost sounded like normal, like the banter that Richie was used to. Like the way things were when things were easy.

Richie shrugged.

"I'd still be your friend. If you were."

"Oh jeez, I didn't know this was one of those movies. I would've brought tissues."

"Shut it, Richie." Eddie's voice cracked on Richie's name.

"Well if we're having a real John Hughes moment, what about you? Anything to tell dear sweet Rich, babe?" he put his head on his fist, still facing Eddie's side.

"Don't call me that." Eddie lifted his head from his hands, sporting his usual beep-beep-richie frown.

Richie frowned back. He opened his mouth to say something, and then did something revolutionary- he closed it.

"Are you?" Eddie said again

"Am I what?"

"Gay."

"Why?"

“No reason.”

“Don’t worry, I’ll still be straight for you, babe.”

“I said don’t call me that!” Eddie stood up, turned to face Richie, and now Richie saw the beginnings of tears in the other boy’s eyes.

“Shit, Jesus, I don’t know!”

“What?” Eddie was breathing heavily now, his inhaler forgotten in one pocket and his face red. He stood over Richie.

“I don’t know. What I am. Maybe I’m both. Who fucking cares? It shouldn’t matter anyway.” Richie had dropped the humor. He’d dropped eye contact, too, instead staring at the knees of Eddie’s corduroys.

“Oh.” they were both quiet for a moment.

“Is that what all this hullabaloo is about?”

“All of this *what* ?” Eddie almost smiled.

“Hubbub. Fuss. Conflagration. Et cetera.” Richie was back to his usual lopsided smile. Eddie’s face fell again, and he sat heavily on the log. One leg on each side, facing Richie, their knees touching.

Eddie was looking studiously at his own thigh, trying not to move his legs. Richie didn’t say anything.

It was almost four minutes before anything happened. Richie opened his mouth.

“Are you?”

“W-what?”

“Playing for the sausage jockeys”

“Excuse me?”

“You know. A pudding puncher. Light in the loafers. A chutney ferret. A boot bandit. Crafty butcher. A fudge-”

“Beep beep, richie.” Eddie’s arms were crossed over his chest. He looked up at the other boy- dark hair falling over the rims of his glasses, faint freckles decorating his face and his bare arms. His eyes, ringed with long lashes, warm and open and brown and slightly warped behind the lenses. His mouth- open just a little, still turned up at the corners. His- *no, stop that. Enough. Enough of this fag shit. This pansy nancy shit this kissing boys please let me kiss boys I want to kiss him I want to kiss boys NO*

Eddie jerked away from Richie. He looked on the edge of crying again, his lips were moving with no sound coming out.

For once in his life, Richie didn’t want to make a joke. He leaned in towards the other boy- light brown hair- dishwater blonde- combed back and then flopping forward in the crest of his forehead. Upturned nose and blue eyes and soft cheekbones and a yellow polo shirt and his hands, the nail beds picked until they bled, wrapped in bandaids. His mouth. Richie paused, let his eyes rest there.

“What’s crackalackin, Eddie?”

“Yes.” Eddie started to cry for real, fat tears rolling to the end of his chin. He hugged his elbows, absently rubbing the scar from his broken arm.

“Yes?”

Eddie just kept crying in response. Richie stayed quiet.

Eventually, he realized Eddie was trying to say something through his shaky-breath sobs.

“You.”

“What’d I do, Eds?”

“Yuh- you.” he took a deep breath. “It’s you.”

“I don’t-” Richie looked into Eddie’s eyes. Maybe he was usually not a very perceptive kind of guy. Maybe he usually tried to ignore emotion- not just his own, but other people’s too. Richie looked at the other boy, into his eyes, and they were blue and full of tears and

full of something else too and he looked so vulnerable. So torn-open.

Richie grabbed Eddie's hand, impulsive, brought it to his mouth, and kissed the back of Eddie's knuckles.

Eddie stopped breathing for a moment, then began digging in his pockets for his inhaler.

"Kind of killing the vibe, here, babe."

"Fuck you."

"Oh, okay, I had no idea we were moving this fast, but if you insist-"

"Shut up, Rich." Eddie's face was red, and he laughed in that awkward way that happens after crying, almost like his body wasn't sure if it was safe yet.

Somehow, that fragile little laugh had been enough and he leaned in and kissed Richie on the mouth. *Him, him, kissing him, kissing a boy, kissing a boy kissingaboyyourekissingaboy youre kissingrichietozierholysitholyshit* Eddie pulled away.

Richie looked shocked but not upset. Eddie blushed, pulling back into his defensive position. Richie grabbed his hand again, this time twining it with his hand. He stood, pulling Eddie behind him.

So maybe they were both scared. And torn-open. Maybe their hearts were racing and there were images flashing through both of their heads- the bad things that could happen. They walked back up towards the town together, scared shitless, two boys, holding hands.

Author's Note:

im on tumblr @ mlmtrashmouth hit me up!! send messages!! love you all!!!